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SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO NORTH KOREAN MISSILE LAUNCHES

REF: A. SECSTATE 111144

1B. 05 SOFIA 1324

¶1. (SBU) We delivered ref. A talking points on July 7 to Krassimir Stefanov, Director of the Asia, Australia and Oceania Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He said that Bulgaria fully shares the U.S. concerns about the provocative actions that the DPRK has undertaken, and is supportive of the international community's reaction to these actions. Bulgaria will freeze all activities that it had planned with North Korea, including a proposed training program for North Korean diplomats (ref. B). Up until now Bulgaria was acting on the basis of the Six-Party Talks Joint Statement understandings in trying to maintain a certain level of diplomatic relations with the DPRK, but the latter's recent actions have "turned everything upside down," in Stefanov's words.

¶2. (SBU) Stefanov believes that North Korea's actions were driven by the worsening economic conditions within the country, and also by international political imperatives that have fueled the North Korean government's desire to show that they are strong and will not let themselves be bullied. Stefanov stated that the international community should show a firm and unanimous response so that North Korea can feel the gravity of the situation. Stefanov concluded that Bulgaria hopes that the DPRK cooperates with the international community's decisions, and prefers a quick resolution to the issue by diplomatic means if possible.

¶3. (U) The Bulgarian Foreign Ministry issued the following statement on July 6:

The Bulgarian side sharply condemns such provocative actions, which not only threaten security in the region but also undermine the international community's efforts for achieving an acceptable agreement on North Korea's nuclear program. On more than one occasion Bulgaria has expressed its concern over the non-compliance of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with its international obligations and with the continuing activities for developing its nuclear and missile program. We call on the Korean authorities to re-confirm immediately the moratorium on firing long-range missiles and to halt all activities for their development. The Republic of Bulgaria will support future efforts by the international community for finding a peaceful and all-encompassing solution to all issues concerning security in the Korean peninsula.

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